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1

“—— and Other Poets”

1



“_____ and Other Poets”

1



Life's Aspiration

See page 107

“— and Other Poets”

BY
LOUIS UNTERMEYER

With frontispiece by
GEORGE WOLFE PLANK



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1916



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To

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

**WITH ALL SORTS OF FRIENDSHIP, ADMIRATION AND
APOLOGIES . . . "INCLUDING THE SCANDINAVIAN"**

100

PREFATORY NOTE

"PARODY," said someone, and it must have been G. K. Chesterton, "is the critic's half-holiday." . . . "Far from converting virtue into a paradox and degrading truth by ridicule," (I am quoting Isaac D'Israeli) "parody will only strike at what is chimerical and false; it is not a piece of buffoonery so much as a critical exposition." Casting about for something between an apology and an air of dignity the parodist usually fishes up phrases like the foregoing ones. Or, if he has an educative turn of mind, (and he generally has) he prefaces his collection with a disquisition on the various forms and classes of parody; pointing out the difference between the mere burlesque of sound and the subtler (and more critical) parody of sense. After which the reader is rather sharply told that the latter form is the only one worth serious consideration. The reader is also given to understand, in a coy

and surprisingly modest last sentence, that the present parodist employs only this more elevated and illuminating method.

Having thus established and betrayed my own position I immediately disclaim it. Having spiked my own guns I cannot very well announce that I have attempted to parody the thoughts, moods and manners of the poets victimized rather than any specific work, and that in only one case did I have a particular poem in mind. Neither can I now lay claim to any educative and serious pretensions. Nor can I go on to say anything about the forms and functions of parody; pointing out the difference between the mere burlesque of sound and the subtler (and more critical) parody of sense. I will add however, that throughout "this slender sheaf of verse," (I quote from Felicia Hemans, *The Bookman* and the Publishers' Fall Catalogue) the latter form has been given serious consideration, and that the present parodist has employed only this more elevated and illuminating method.

NEW YORK, 1915.

L. U.

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THE BANQUET OF THE BARDS



JOHN MASEFIELD

Pressed for a Narrative, Tells the True Story
of *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son*.

THOMAS, the vagrant piper's son,
Was fourteen when he took to fun;
He was the eighth of a bewilderin'
Family of eleven children.
Mary, the first of all the lot,
Was married to a drunken sot;
And Clement, second on the list,
Fell off the roof and was never missed.
Susan and little Goldilocks
Were carried off by the chicken-pox,
And Franky went—though I can't recall
Whatever happened to him at all.
The same with the next one, black-eyed Jim;
Nobody knew what happened to him.
And Nell went bad—she broke the laws
And shamed her folks on account of a
'Cause';

16 *The Banquet of the Bards*

And the last they saw of her, her wrists
Were tied to some other suffragists'.
Thomas was next—and he's still alive
The only one of them all to thrive.
The rest just petered out somehow—
At least, nobody hears of them now.

Now Tom, as I said when I'd begun,
Was fourteen when he took to fun.
Wine was the stuff he loved to swim in;
He lied and fought and went with women.
He scattered oaths, as one flings bounties,
The dirtiest dog in seven counties.

One morning when the sun was high
And larks were cleaving the blue sky,
Singing as though their hearts would break
With April's keen and happy ache,
Thomas went walking, rather warm,
Beside old Gaffer Hubbard's farm.
He saw that wintry days were over
And bees were out among the clover.
Earth stretched its legs out in the sun;
Now that the spring **was well begun,**



Heaven itself grew bland and fat.
So Thomas loafed a while and spat,
And thought about his many follies—
Yonder the gang was tipping trollies.
The sight made Tom's red blood run quicker
Than whisky, beer or any liquor.
"By cripes," he said, "that's what I need;
'Twill make a man of me indeed.
Why should I be a drunken slob
When there's Salvation in a job!"
He started up—when lo, behind him,
As though it sought to maim and blind him,
A savage pig sprang straight against him.
At first Tom kicked and fought and fenced
him,
And then he fell. But as they rolled
Tom took a tight and desperate hold
And thought the bloody fight was over.
"Here is one pig that's *not* in clover—
To-night I'll have you in my cupboard."
Who should come up but Gaffer Hubbard.
"Leggo that pig."
"What for?" says Tom.
"It's mine, you lousy, thieving bum."

18 *The Banquet of the Bards*

"It ain't."

"It is."

"Clear out!"

"We'll see."

"I'll fix 'ee!"

"Better let me be."

With that the farmer turned again

And called out half a dozen men.

Up they came running. "Here," said he,

"Here is a pig belongs to me—

But ye can have it all for eating

If you will give this tramp a beating."

"Hurroo!" they shouted in high feather,

And jumped on Thomas all together.

So the pig was eat, and Tom was beat;

And Tom went roaring down the street!

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

Tells What He Knew of *Simple Simon*.

WHAT does it matter—who are we to say
How much is clear and how much there must be
Behind his mystical directness—see,
He left us smiling, and a bit astray.
Yet there were times when Simon would convey
A cryptic sharpness, etched with something
free;
For he was touched with fire and prophecy,
And we who scarcely knew him, mourn
him. . . . Eh?

I'll say this much for Simon: If his ghost
Has half the life of many men, or most,
He will not rest in the ophidian night.
He will come back and storm the western gate,
Scorning such lesser things as Death and
Fate. . . .
Well, there is that side, too. . . . You may be
right.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Gives a Keltic Version of *Three Wise Men
of Gotham.*

Down by the clashing waters the three wise
men did go,
And there they cut a hazel wand and laid it
on the snow.
They plucked the apples of the sun from many
a cedar tree,
And heard the white hound calling—and thus
they put to sea.

The Shadowy Horses of the wind followed
the Hornless Deer.
The reeds were full of silver sounds, the
waters full of fear;
The Rose put forth its thorny feet and danced
to an old tune,
And in the grass the Purple Pig bayed at the
w

And I shall always hear it, that white and
silent song;
And I shall cut a hazel wand and carry it
along;
And I shall cast it over the waves and let it
find the track
Of those who went to sea in a bowl and never
once turned back.

ROBERT FROST

Relates *The Death of the Tired Man.*

THERE were two of us left in the berry-patch;
Bryan O'Lin and Jack had gone to Nor-
wich.—

They called him Jack a' Nory, half in fun
And half because it seemed to anger him.—
So there we stood and let the berries go,
Talking of men we knew and had forgotten.
A sprawling, humpbacked mountain frowned
on us

And blotted out a smouldering sunset cloud
That broke in fiery ashes. "Well," he said,
"Old Adam Brown is dead and gone; you'll
never

See him any more. He used to wear
A long, brown coat that buttoned down be-
fore.

That's all I ever knew of him; I guess that's
all

That anyone remembers. Eh?" he said,
And then, without a pause to let me answer,
He went right on.

"How about Dr. Foster?"

"Well, how *about* him?" I managed to reply.
He glared at me for having interrupted.
And stopped to pick his words before he
spoke;

Like one who turns all personal remarks
Into a general survey of the world.
Choosing his phrases with a finicky care
So they might fit some vague opinions,
Taken, third-hand, from last year's *New York*
Times

And jumbled all together into a thing
He thought was his philosophy.

"Never mind;

There's more in Foster than you'd understand.
But," he continued, darkly as before,
"What do you make of Solomon Grundy's
case?

You know the gossip when he first came here.
Folks said he'd gone to smash in Lunenburg,
And four years in the State Asylum here

24 *The Banquet of the Bards*

Had almost finished him. It was Sanders' job
That put new life in him. A clear, cool day;
The second Monday in July it was.

'Born on a Monday,' that is what they said.
Remember the next few days? I guess you
don't;

That was before your time. Well, Tuesday
night

He said he'd go to church; and just before
the prayer

He blurts right out, 'I've come here to get
christened.

If I am going to have a brand new life
I'll have a new name, too.' Well, sure enough
They christened him, though I've forgotten
what;

And Etta Stark, (you know, the pastor's girl)
Her head upset by what she called romance,
She went and married him on Wednesday
noon.

Thursday the sun or something in the air
Got in his blood and right off he took sick.
Friday the thing got worse, and so did he;
And Saturday at four o'clock he died.

Buried on Sunday with the town decked out
As if it was a circus-day. And not a soul
Knew why they went or what he meant to
them

Or what he died of. What would be *your*
guess? "

"Well," I replied, "it seems to me that he,
Just coming from a sedentary life,
Felt a great wave of energy released,
And tried to crowd too much in one short
week.

The laws of physics teach—"

"No, not at all.

He never knew 'em. He was just tired," he
said.

WALTER DE LA MARE
Tells His Listeners About *Jack and Jill*.

Up to the top of the haunted turf
They climbed on the moonlit hill.
Not a leaf rustled in the underbrush;
The listening air was still.

And only the noise of the water pail
As it struck on a jutting stone,
Clattered and jarred against the silence
As the two trod on alone.

Up to the moonlit crest they went;
And, though not a word would they
say,
Their thoughts outnumbered a poet's
love-songs
In the first green weeks of May.

The stealthy shadows crept closer,
They clutched at the hem of Jill's
gown;
And there at the very top she stumbled,
And Jack came shuddering down.

Their cries rang out against the stillness,
Pitiful and high and thin.
And the echoes edged back still further
As the silence gathered them in.

VACHEL LINDSAY
Borrows a Megaphone and Chants *The
Glorious Fourth.*

I

[*Very fast and explosively*]

Bang!

And the dawn

Burst madly on

The world like a cosmic cannon-cracker.

And the great cloud-pack

Began to crack

Like a stack of black and crackling lac-
quer.

Bang – bang – bang – *bang* – *BANG!*

BANG!

The echoes crashed,

The echoes smashed,

The echoes flashed

And dashed abashed

Out of the city and never stopped.
And a thousand small boys gayly
dropped
Paper torpedoes
Like outworn credos.
And under the tin-cans,
Sputtering within cans,
The fire-crackers pattered as they pop-
pop-popped:
“Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled
peppers;
*“Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled
peppers—*
Bang—bang—bang—bang—*BANG!*
Pop.”

[*Softer, but vibrantly; the ‘a’ sounds very
brassy.*]

Then I heard the battle,
Then I saw the flare;
Then I heard the muskets rattle
Through the shuddering air.

30 *The Banquet of the Bards*

[With a heavily accented rhythm; very sonorously.]

Gone were the urchins and the city-
streets;

Gone were the merchants and the snares
and cheats.

Lo, from the mist of more than six score
years,

Rose the thunder of a nation's cheers;

[Very oratorically.]

Boys and farmers shook the old world's
pride

And a thousand Washingtons went forth
and died.

II

*[With increasing speed and a large orchestra;
re-inforced by a wind-machine, sixteen
cymbals and extra brasses.]*

ssssSSHhh.

Now the light goes

And suddenly there

The dark earth glows
 Transfigured and fair,
 As the first roman-candles leap in the air.
 And now the first
 Great flower-pots burst
 And the pin-wheel whirls like a fiery
 sprocket;
 And lo, like a bolt released from its
 socket,
 Trailing its fires
 Like fierce desires,
 On-on-upward goes the first sky-rocket.

[With a sustained hissing through the teeth.]

Siss-siss-ssscreaming through the startled
 skies,

Siss-siss-ssspilling stars before it dies.

Siss – boom – ah. . . .

ssssSHhh. . . .

A-a-h.

[With even greater fervor, if possible.]

Then I saw a people,

Then I heard a shout,

32 *The Banquet of the Bards*

While from hearth and steeple
All the bells rang out.

[*In a ringing voice, like a set of chimes.*]

Heard the loud bells, proud bells, spire-
bells,

Heard the call bells, hall-bells, fire-bells,
Gay bells, sleigh-bells, night and day
bells;

Singing there and swinging there and all
together ringing there :

“Ding-dong – clangaranga – boom, boom-
ah.

Ding-dong – clangaranga – boom, boom-
ah;

Rejoice, oh people, ye shall live and be
Free and equal in a land made free!”

WHAT?

“ Well, *almost* equal—*almost* free.

Fear no more from tyranny,

But with loud democracy

While the starry symbol waves

In a land of liberty,

Yankees never shall be slaves!”

Bang, bang; ding-dong—boom, boom-ah;
Clangaranga, clangaranga - sis-boom-bah.
Bang - *Bang* - bang - *bang* - *BANG!*
Sssh.
Pop. . . . Pop. . . . Pop. . . .
Bah. . . . !

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

Eulogizes *Humpty Dumpty*.

UPON the wall, frowned on by envious stars,
He sat, secure above the lurching world.
The shrill, sweet business of the venturous day
Flowed at his feet and, sweeping forward,
sang.

Over his head the lavish heavens spread
Sunset and sun, twilight and burning cloud;
And every radiant and launching wind,
Bore him cool pleasures on its smooth, blue
back.

And yellow morning, slipping over the hills,
Shedding her cloak of dawn, reached out her
hands

And clasped him first of all things.

Now he lies,

Fallen, irrevocably ruined, here.

He, who was once as keen and tuned for joy
As harps made ready for a hero's welcome,

Or girls in April trembling against love.
There are no kings, and no king's cunning
horses
Can place him back upon his excellent emi-
nence;
Not all the workmen from the shops of
Heaven
Can re-establish him or send the blood
Thrilling with insolent music through his
veins.
Deaf to the trumpeting winds and seas he lies.
Yet in this brave and silent unconcern
He shall command a rapt, exulting reverence;
Quiet and awe shall blaze about his head,
Kindling a glory in our darkened lives.

EDGAR LEE MASTERS

Adds a Tombstone from *The East River
Anthology*.

MAURICE VERNON

I WAS just sixteen,
In the queer twisting of a delayed adolescence,
When I came to New York;
To study the classics, as my mother said.
And, according to my father, to become a
man.

I liked the prep. school I attended—
It was such a pleasant place to get away from.
Often I neglected Terence for the tango,
Or Livy for Lillian Lorraine.

I was just learning to wear my dinner-jacket
In that "carefully careless" manner indorsed
by *Vogue*,

When my father died bankrupt;
Throwing me upon my own resources.

Then I found I hadn't any.
So, knowing how to use neither my hands nor
my brain,
I remembered my feet
And became a chorus man.
For years I was with Ziegfeld and K. and E.
Then the dance-craze came and swept me to
the heights.
I became a teacher to the most exclusive—
My name was in electric lights six feet high.
The clippings I collected, placed end to end,
Would have reached from Dantzic to Wal-
singham and back.
Then one night I turned my ankle.
When I was able to get up again
The public had flocked to another favorite
So I entered an Endurance Dancing Carnival
And waltzed myself to death.

There is a great, saintly-looking fellow here
Whom some call Vitus.
And many dervishes
And a fine sultry-eyed girl
By the curious name of Miriam.

38 *The Banquet of the Bards*

But most of all we love to watch a certain
princess;

Her veils uncoil like seven serpents

And she carries a dark head on a silver platter.

She dances to it forever.

RALPH HODGSON

Rides a Lyrical Cock-Horse to *Banbury*
Cross.

LITTLE Old Lady,
Stop and come here;
Pause in the heyday
Of your career.
Put up your rings and bells,
Cover your toes;
Here is a music
That nobody knows.

Here, with the leafy throngs,
You shall learn all the songs
Chanted by toads and trees;
And the far melodies
Sung by the gypsy moon.
You shall hear every tune
Waken that ever was
Murmured within the grass.

The Banquet of the Bards

Secrets shall rise and float
Out of the linnet's throat;
And every lily's bell
Shall yield its miracle.
You shall know all the fair
Import of every air;
Even the half-formed wish
Blown by the dreaming fish.

If you will stay with me
This shall be so;
You shall hear music
Wherever you go.
Here where it's shady
Naught hurries past.
Life, you Old Lady,
Why go so fast?

STEPHEN PHILLIPS

Takes *Old King Cole* on a Sedate Stroll
Through Bulfinch's *Mythology*.

HE lived, an ancient and senescent king,
Long after Jupiter had loosed his bolts;
After gray Dis had locked his awful doors
And high Olympus crumbled into dust.
Merry he was, a blithe and genial soul;
Happy as Dionysos and as fond
Of games and dances as that smiling god.
Often he called, full loudly, for his bowl,
A bowl more vast than ever Bacchus owned;
Or e'er Silenus dipped into and held
For tipsy Nymphs or Thyiades to quaff.
Then called he for his pipe—not for the reed
Fashioned by Pan to ease his futile love
Or Syrinx trembling at the river-bank;
Not for the simple pipe that Paris played
When he was shepherding on Ida's hill;

42 *The Banquet of the Bards*

But such a pipe that flamed and smoked as
though

'Twere Ilium that burned.

And fiddlers three

He bellowed for—musicians bland of touch
As Orpheus when he swept his singing lute
Amid the ancient silences and stars;
Or Marsyas when he brought the roseate blush
To Fair Aurora's cheeks, and dreamy birds
Amid the boundless blue sang sweeter than
The Muses choiring on Parnassus' slope.
Thus he sat, bosomed in olympian calm,
And drank a mirth deep as Pierian founts;
Till laughter touched the pity of the Fates,
And Grief sank weeping in the stygian night.

OWEN SEAMAN

Establishes the *Entente Cordiale* by Reciting
The Singular Stupidity of J. Spratt,
Esq., in the Manner of Guy
Wetmore Carryl.

Or all the mismated pairs ever created
The worst of the lot were the Spratts.
Their life was a series of quibbles and queries
And quarrels and squabbles and spats.
They argued at breakfast, they argued at tea,
And they argued from midnight to quarter
past three.

The family Spratt-head was rather a fat-head,
And a bellicose body to boot.
He was selfish and priggish and worse, he was
piggish—

A regular beast of a brute.
At table his acts were incredibly mean;
He gave his wife fat—and *he* gobbled the
lean!

44 *The Banquet of the Bards*

What's more, she was censured whenever she
ventured

To dare to object to her fare;

He said "It ain't tasteful, but we can't be
wasteful;

And *someone* must eat what is there!"

But his coarseness exceeded all bounds of control

When he laughed at her Art and the State of
her Soul.

So what with his jeering and fleering and
sneering,

He plagued her from dawn until dark.

He bellowed "I'll teach ye to read Shaw and
Nietzsche"—

And he was as bad as his bark.

"The place for a woman——" he'd start,
very glib. . .

And so on, for two or three hours *ad lib*.

So very malignant became his indignant

Remarks about "Culture" and "Cranks,"

That at last she revolted. She up and she
bolted

And entered the militant ranks. . .

When she died, after breaking nine-tenths of
the laws,

She left all her money and jewels to the
Cause!

And *THE MORAL* is this (though a bit ab-
struse) :

What's sauce for a more or less proper goose,
When it rouses the violent, feminine dander,
Is apt to be sauce for the propaganda.

GILBERT K. CHESTERTON
Rises to the Toast of "Coffee."

I

STRONG wine it is a mocker; strong wine it is
a beast.

It grips you when it starts to rise; it is the
Fabled Yeast.

You should not offer ale or beer from hops
that are freshly picked,

Nor even Benedictine to tempt a benedict.

For wine has a spell like the lure of hell, and
the devil has mixed the brew;

And the friends of ale are a sort of a pale and
weary and witless crew;

And the taste of beer is a sort of a queer and
undecided brown—

But, comrades, I give you coffee—drink it up,
drink it down.

*With a fol-de-rol-dol and a fol-de-rol-dee,
etc. . .*

II

Oh, cocoa's the drink for an elderly don who
lives with an elderly niece;

And tea is the drink for studios and loud and
violent peace—

And brandy's the drink that spoils the clothes
when the bottle breaks in the trunk.

But coffee's the drink that is drunken by men
who will never be drunk.

So, gentlemen, up with the festive cup, where
Mocha and Java unite;

It clears the head when things are said too
brilliant to be bright!

It keeps the stars from the golden bars and
the lips of the tipsy town.

So here's to strong, black coffee—drink it up,
drink it down.

*With a fol-de-rol-dol and a fol-de-rol-dee,
etc. . .*

JAMES OPPENHEIM

Rises with a Psycho-Analytic Expression and
Reads *Sex and Stars*.

I

I AM chained with the fetters of love
I can never escape.
Like a slave who scarcely dares dream of his
 freedom
I am beaten and bound.
And lo, in the fetters of love, I can only strug-
 gle and die.

Save me, ye confident stars;
Save me, oh God-yeasted life.
Folded in the black wings of night; bathed in
 the fires of creation,
Tasting the dark brew of the elements,
I drink infinity, as a child at the breast of its
 mother.

II

The little earth rolls in the womb of the
skies—

Next door a baby was born, it cried at its
birth.

Its mother and father wept at its coming;
They were too tired to hope; even too tired
to die. . .

She had the soul of a dancer—she crawled and
stumbled through life;

He had the soul of a leader—they made him
a slave.

Lifeless they rose to their work, lifeless they
came to their bed;

Stumbling, like all of us dead, to a quieter
death.

Next door a baby was born—it cried at its
birth. . .

I shall not be enslaved; I shall tear myself
free!

Oh, the conquering urge of the unleashed
libido

50 *The Banquet of the Bards*

Spilling the suns in their courses and spurring
the world.

Oh Nietzsche, Whitman, Havelock Ellis, Lin-
coln, Freud and Jung—

Help me to cast off these wrappers of custom
and prohibition,

Tear down the barriers of reticence.

Let me outgrow these swaddling-clothes of
sex—

Let me stand, facing the candid gaze of an
eternal dawn,

Clad in the dazzling splendor of my awakened
Self.

WILLIAM WATSON

After a Titanic Struggle, Gives Birth to
An Epigram.

WHEN royal Love designs to visit Man
He dons his purple robes, his crown of fire;
And, with a treasure-laden caravan,
He smiles and goes—accompanied by Desire.

But, when Love designs to come to Woman,
he
Puts off his royal vestments, leaves his
throne;
And with nor pride nor pompous pageantry,
He goes—so every woman says,—alone.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT
Sings The Slave Trader's Chanty.

I

ALL the way to Guadaloupe, around the horn
and back again,
Shores that seem a dusky dream of ebony
and spice;
Shifting of our cargoes there and out upon
the track again,
Loaded down with black and brown and
magic merchandise.
Isfahan and Hindustan, we leave 'em all in
peace again.
Up the straits and through the gates of hell
itself we roar.
For now we hold the talisman, we've found
the Golden Fleece again;
Slaves are what we're after—and we've
shipped a hundred more!

CHORUS

*So, sing a song of bank-notes, a cabin full of
rye;
Four and ninety blackbirds for any man to
buy;
Four and ninety blackbirds jammed into the
hold—
And we're the mystic merchants, for we turn
'em into gold!*

II

We used to hear the jackal scream, we listened
to the cockatoo;
“*Arroompah*” went the elephant, a-thun-
dering in his bones.
The Indian girls were free with pearls and
stuffed 'em in our pocket too;
The very sands of those far lands were
strewn with shining stones.
It cost us time and money then, perhaps a
strong-armed hint or two
To barter with a Tartar though we robbed
him all we could.

54 *The Banquet of the Bards*

But now some colored beads, a keg of rum, a
gaudy print or two—
And we're a thousand dollars (and a nigger)
to the good!

CHORUS

*Four and ninety blackbirds of every size and
shade;*

*Four and ninety blackbirds, safe as safe
can be.*

Boreas shall blow for us;

Poseidon's hand shall guide us;

Mercury shall chauffeur us,

And Fortune walk beside us.

*Apollo too shall join the crew and sing as
loud as we,*

A catch and a carol to the old Slave Trade;

The sport of all the Kings that sail the sea!

EZRA POUND

Putting on a Greek Head-Dress, Provençal
Slippers, and an Imagiste Air, Recites:

ΠΗΛΑ ΠΟΤΝΑΙΝΤΣ

I

COME, my songs, let us sing about some-
thing—
It is time we were getting ourselves talked
about.

II

The iron menace of the pillar-box
is threatening the virginity of night.
Oh, Lars Porsena, let us be naked and impu-
dent,
as the first day of April,
or Bernard Shaw without a toga.
Let us run up behind people and pinch them
in their too-fleshy ankles,
in the green twilight;

56 *The Banquet of the Bards*

Male and female alike (I hear that they read
you, Walt Whitman)—
*Eheu, eheu fugaces—sic semper—sic transit—
et cetera.*

Loosen thy chrome girdle;
Unveil the crux ansata—oh Ardanari-Iswari.

III

TO A VERY CERTAIN LADY

Cybele, Cybele, you have grown sleek and
damnably patronizing.
You pat me on the head, indolently,
as though I were a green puppy from
Patagonia;
You tell me your love is platonic, and your
passion
has cooled to me,
Like a porcelain pitcher in which hot water
for shaving
has been standing for hours.

Go to—put on your latest Basque tea-gown
And catch other tadpoles in your cheap net.

Marry, as you most likely will, a Chicago mil-
lionaire,

(I can imagine no worse end for you)
And cultivate the Indiana literati. . . .

Your heart is an empty dance-hall :
With lights blazing and musicians playing
on mute instruments .

SARA TEASDALE

Looking as Sapphic as possible, Recites
 "A Song."

I HID my heart in the wind,
 The cool, young wind of May—
For I knew that my love would find
 And carry it away.

Happy I lay—and dumb;
 Held in the sun's warm clasp;
For I knew that my love would come,
 And see it there, and grasp.

I saw him stoop and start;
 And then—oh day turned black!—
My love picked up my heart
 And brought it safely back.

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

Adds to the Gayety of Libations by Adapting
the Eleventh Ode of the Fourth
Book of "Horace—1916 Model."

"Est mihi nonum superantis annum. . ."

SEE, Phyllis, I've a jar of Alban wine,
Made of the choicest grapes that one can
gather.

Vintage? Well, yes—its years are more than
nine.

Inviting?. . . . Rather.

And that's not all our well-known festive
cheer—

There's ivy in the yard, and heaps of pars-
ley.

Come, twine some in your hair—and say, old
dear,

Don't do it sparsely.

60 *The Banquet of the Bards*

The flat's all ready for the sacrifice;
In every corner handy to display it,
There's silver. . . Yes, the house looks extra
nice,

 If I *do* say it.

The very flame is trembling, and the smoke
Goes whirling upward with an eager rust-
ling;
The household's overrun with busy folk.
 Just see them hustling!

What's that? You want to know the cause of
this?

 Why, it's the birthday of friend P. Mae-
cenas;
And doubly dear because the season is
 Sacred to Venus.

Some holiday? Some holiday is right!
And—well, my Latin heart and soul are
in it.
Therefore I hope you'll be on hand tonight—
 Eh?. . . Just a minute.

Telephus? Pah. He isn't worth a thought—
If Telly dares neglect you, dear, why—let
him!
He's nothing but a giddy good-for-nought.
Come and forget him.

Come, and permit your grief to be assuaged;
Forsake this flirt on whom you have your
heart set.
Besides, Dame Rumor hath it he's engaged—
"One of our smart set."

From vain desires and too ambitious dreams
The doom of Phaeton's enough to scare
you. . .
This is—ahem—my favorite of themes—
But, dear, I spare you.

Come then, so that the evening may not lack
Your voice that makes each heart a willing
rover;
And, as we sing, black Care will grow less
black—
Oh, come on over.

AMY LOWELL

Brushing up Her Polyphonic Prose, Declaims *Fortitude*.

ZIP! The thought of you tears in my heart.
I fumble and start. I mumble and trip. Zip!
The night is a blur. The yellow wax candles
whimper and stir. And I, on my way to the
heavens, am hurled to the jabbering world.
Down, down to the hideous level of Brown;
to the Jones, Cohns and various Malones, I
sink. The sails of my spirit sag and shrink.
The rains of distemper ruffle my feathers and
put out my fire. The Zeppelins in my soul
drag in the mire; they shiver and rip. Zip!

In my neighbor's garden a blue herring
sings. *Twee—twee.* . . On the topmost
bough of a cinnamon tree he throws his rap-
ture like a fine spray against the stony night.
Over and under the petulant silver thunder of
the fountains he cries. I hear silver and

mauve . . . and the faint sheen of olives. The green echoes rise. They break, these thin-stemmed glasses of sound; ground and shattered by the still skies. The pale herring's song is long with a slender perfume. A whiff of red memories blows through the gloom . . . and melts on the tongue. Into the room a young, blond wind ripples and laughs. She stammers and speaks with a breath that is full of blush-roses and leeks. And the moon, without warning, comes eerily from the west. He staggers wearily, knowing no rest; lurching out of a cloud and singing aloud. He too laughs; a crazy laughter breaking through his scars. Like a drunken Pierrot spilling the stars from his too-long sleeves. The sun grieves and looks down reprovingly. And the day bursts forth, rejoicing alone. Darkness is overthrown as the great wheels turn. In a thousand factories the tungstens burn. The shaftings worry and moan. The dynamos drone. . .

Pardon me. There goes the 'phone. . .

W. H. DAVIES

Rises with Elaborate Simplicity and Sings a
Spring Song of a Super-Blake.

THE grass is green,
The sky is blue,
The bird will preen,
The cat will mew.
The fly has wings,
The child a toy—
Such little things
Do give me joy.

The tree has leaves,
The road has miles,
And nothing grieves
Whene'er it smiles.
The crops have sun;
The streams close by
Do ramble on,
And so do I.

And happy then
My lot shall be
While rook and wren
Build in the tree;
While ring-doves coo,
And lions roar,
As long as two
And two are four.

RUDYARD KIPLING
Is Prevailed upon to Read His Unpublished
War-Poem *England Speaks*.

I

TRULY ye are my Sons; and I as your Mother
will bide—

Even before I could need ye, ye sprang full-
armed to my side.

Your swords have flashed from their scab-
bards, waiting my lightest call;

And I that have borne and bred ye,—would I
could bleed for ye all.

Now we must meet Death daily, valiantly face
to face.

Aye, for the good of the Peoples, for the
sacred hopes of the race,

Flesh of my flesh ye have answered; waiting
no word ye arose

From the home of the fevered East-wind and
the haunts of the Virgin snows.

From its rock where Cape Town gazes over
the herded seas,
From the gray wild tides that threaten the
gray Antipodes,
Ye have rushed like waves from the waters,
resistless and free and tall—
And I am the Mother that bore ye;—would
I could bleed for ye all.

II

Yea, we are sworn to the Law, bearing the
strength of the clan;
We have made our peace with Adam-zad, the
bear that walks like a man.
Mighty are we, and our Allies weary never
nor sleep;
For greater than guns or nations are the
pledges that we keep.

Honor shall stand behind us, Lust and Dark-
ness shall run—
Yea, and the years shall find us curbing the
savage Hun,

68 *The Banquet of the Bards*

As long as England's roast-beef shall
strengthen England's tars,
And the English navies tower under the
English stars.

While the Lord of Hosts, Jehovah, fights on
the English side,
And the very skies of England lift with an
English pride,
Wrapped in her fog like a mantle, and fired
with English ale,
*As long as she lists to her poets, England can
never fail!*

ROBERT CARLTON BROWN

Emits a Few Bubbles.

I

CHEESES

I AM the king of the rats.
And all my thoughts are little mice.
They have a great way of running every-
where,
And a greater hunger.
Nothing will satisfy their ferocious appetite—
Not even when they have devoured the world,
And gnaw on the thin, gray rind
Of the mouldy skies.

II

COLUMBUS CIRCLE

Is this China?
Something tells me it must be.
It may be the fantastically-colored Chop-Suey
joint

70 *The Banquet of the Bards*

Above the Child's restaurant at the corner.
Or it may be the lone traffic policeman
Standing like a blue Buddha
With his one eternally upraised arm.
Or it may be the mass of amber electric lights
Dropping from the sign boards,
Like globules of gold perspiration
From a Chinaman's yellow brow.

JOHN HALL WHEELLOCK

Sums up *Love, Life, Liberation, Etc.*

THE world is hungry for Beauty;
With eager and terrible eyes
It strains to its passionate bosom
Each tawdry and tender surprise.

Common and liberal and holy,
The songs of its spirit ascend—
Lavish and casual and conquering,
Reckless and glad—at the end!

HARRY GRAHAM

Adds to His *Misrepresentative Men*, a Picture of J. M. Barrie.

THIS is an ever-changing world
 (A truth that needs but small adorning),
Our last night's standards all are furled,
 New banners bear new truths this morning.
And, far from foolish jest, the fact is
Today's fad is to-morrow's practice.

Shaw rules the hour; the callow cub
 Stirring his toddy with a lemon in
Is haunted even at the club
 By visions of the Shavian feminine.
The sweeper, with an accent foreign,
Is (pro and) conning Mrs. Warren.

Enough, enough—we gladly turn
 And never for a moment tarry
Until we reach that happy bourne
 Of childhood beauty built by Barrie.

Where eyes and skies are always blue,
And every dream's a Dream-come-true.

Under his spell we children love
Each frail-spun token of his fancy;
"Believe in fairies?" Heavens above
We *all* do—save the man who *can* see*
No beauty in each simple tune
Of Peter Pan and Pantaloon.

First, second childhood's faith is his.
Sophists and scholars go and come, he
Proves that each 'Little Mary' is
Naught but a 'Sentimental Tummy.'
And, like the pulse of eager drums,
Our hearts beat at the sound of: "Thrums."

* * * * *

Master, here at your feet I lay
A witless rhyme, unskilled, but showing
The heart of one who walks your way
And hears "the horns of elfland blowing."
Who burlesques when he most reveres;
And winks an eye—to hide his tears.

* I think my italics save an otherwise hopeless line.
—*The Proofreader.*
Thanks.—*The Author.*

ALFRED NOYES
Responds to *The Lyric*.

I

IN the Garden of Poems where each is a
flower,
The Ode is an orchid resplendent and rare;
The Sonnet's a classical lily whose power
..Moves every heart like a dignified prayer.
The Ballad's a hollyhock, quaintest and queer-
est
Of old-fashioned flowers that memory
knows—
But all these seem faded when Song's at its
clearest
And the heart of a lyric's the heart of a
rose.

II

So give me the lyric while Nature is teeming
With rhythm and rhyme; while our vol-
umes are filled

With poems of wild and importunate dream-
ing,

And Heaven itself is uplifted and thrilled.
The universe rocks to the swing of a ballad,
But it warms to a deeper and mightier
mirth—

Aye, robbed of its Song the bright world would
be pallid;

For the soul of a lyric's the soul of the
earth.

III

For Song is eternal; it rides on the æons—

'Tis shod with men's visions and mystical
wings;

'Tis April that quickens the pulse of its
pæans,

And Passion that beats in the heart of all
things.

You can fathom the ode, be it sad or satiric,

You can measure the sonnet with rule and
the rod—

But no one can tear out the soul from the
lyric;

For the lilt of a lyric's the laughter of God!

AUSTIN DOBSON

Recites a *Ballade by Way of Retort*.

(“*Anna’s the name of names for me.*”)

W. E. Henley.

“ANNA”! Insipid and weak as gruel—
“Anna”! As flat as last night’s beer—
Plain as a bed-post and stiff as a newel,
Surely there’s nothing of glamour here!
Names by the hundred enchant the ear,
Stirring the heart with melodious claims;
Arrogant, timid, impulsive and dear—
Rose, after all, is the name of names.

Sally gleams like a laughing jewel,
Bella’s jovial, Maud’s austere;
Rachel’s complacent, Lydia’s cruel,
Laura is classical, Fanny is queer.
Peggy reminds one of rustic cheer,
Lucy of lilies and lofty aims,
Lola of fancies that shift and veer—
Rose, after all, is the name of names.

Sara's a fire for all men's fuel,
Mary's a comfort for all men's fear,
Helen's the smile that invites the duel,
Chloë's the breath of a yesteryear,
Margaret somehow evokes the tear,
Lilith the thought of a thousand shames;
Clara is cool as a lake and clear—
Rose, after all, is the name of names.

ENVOY

Hannah's for home and the 'woman's sphere';
Vivian's all for dances and games;
Julia's imperious, Kate is sincere—
Rose (after all) is the Name of Names!

WITTER BYNNER

Is Prophetic Concerning *Bo-peep in the New
World.*

BO-PEEP was crying. Softly she complained,
" My thoughts, my well-beloved sheep, are
lost;

And now I do not know
Where I may find them. High and low
I've searched, wind-blown and theory-tossed,
But they are gone," she said.

. . . " I used to follow them where'er they led,
And never once disdained
To walk the queer and twisting paths they
went;

Stumbling, but well content
I followed, bent
On learning Life no matter how it pained.
Now pulled by this new interest, now by that,
I leaped from dizzy rock to rock;
Thrilled by the shock

Of being swept and hurled
Into a new and deeper-breathing world.
Happy because I saw
Poems and pains and people in the raw;
Glad of the exquisite feeling that,
Touching the common things of earth,
I was a democrat. . .

And now, I see
How much my faith was worth.
My own emotions, frank and free,
Have, with a heartless, rude democracy,
Deserted me.
I have learned disillusion, to my cost—
And so I weep.
My thoughts, my well-beloved sheep,
Are lost.”

Then I replied:
“Bo-peep, look upward; do not be
A doubter of democracy.
Be lifted by a fresher, lowlier pride.
Fling wide
The glorious gates of your vast woman-soul;

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And you shall find each thought,
Nobler and finer-wrought,
Eager to enter once again;
For you shall be their goal.
And then,
Like wanderers on a homeward track,
Beauty shall bring them back;
Bringing a thousand tales with them . . .
Back to the broad expanse and breathless view;
To this placid forest's glittering hem,—
They shall come back to things they never
 knew;
Visions of men and dreams unfurled—
Back to a richer and more radiant world,—
And to you.

ATTEMPTED AFFINITIES

THE POET BETRAYED

HEINRICH HEINE and CLINTON SCOLLARD
Construct a Rondeau.

IMMORTAL eyes, why do they never die?
They come between me and the cheerful sky
And take the place of every sphinx-like
star.
They haunt me always, always; and they
mar
The comfort of my sleek tranquility.

In dreams you lean your cheek on mine and
sigh;
And all the old, caressing words float by.
They haunt me always, always; yet they
are
Immortal lies.

Oh love of mine, half-queen, half-butterfly,
You tore my soul to hear its dying cry,

And soiled my purpose with a deathless
scar.

Go then, my broken songs, go near and far
And woman's love and her inconstancy
Immortalize.

THE PASSIONATE ÆSTHETE TO
HIS LOVE

ANDREW LANG and OSCAR WILDE Turn a
Nursery Rhyme into a *Rondeau Redoublé*.

*Curly-locks, Curly-locks, wilt thou be mine?
Thou shalt not wash dishes nor yet feed the
 swine,
But sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam,
And feast upon strawberries, sugar and
 cream.*

Curly-locks, Curly-locks, brighten and beam
 Joyous assent with a rapturous sign;
Hasten the Vision—quicken the Dream—
 Curly-locks, Curly-locks, wilt thou be mine?

Curly-locks, Curly-locks; come, do not deem
 Thou need'st not be mindful of sheep or of
 kine;

Thou shalt not peel onions nor cook them in
steam,

*Thou shalt not wash dishes nor yet feed the
swine.*

Curly-locks, Curly-locks, thou shalt recline
Languid and limp by a silvery stream;
Thou shalt not grieve though the world is
malign,

But sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam.

Curly-locks, Curly-locks, oft as we dine
I shall read verses of mine—ream upon
ream;

Whilst thou shalt applaud me with, “Ah, that
is fine,”

*And feast upon strawberries, sugar and
cream.*

Come, while the days are all laughter and
shine;

Come, while the nights are all silence and
gleam.

Youth is a goblet; Love is the wine;

And Life is a lyric that has but one theme:

“Curly-locks—Curly-locks!”

A MALAY LOVE-SONG

P. B. SHELLEY and LAURENCE HOPE Meet
in a *Pantoum*.

I swoon, I sink, I fall—
Your beauty overpowers me;
I am a prey to all
The yearning that devours me.

Your beauty overpowers me—
It never gives me rest;
The yearning that devours me
Is loud within my breast.

It never gives me rest.
And tho' a wilder ringing
Is loud within my breast,
I have no heart for singing.

And tho' a wilder ringing
Comes ever and again,
I have no heart for singing
And Music is a pain. . .

Attempted Affinities

Comes ever and again
The vision of your beauty;
And Music is a pain,
And Life a weary duty.

The vision of your beauty
Arises everywhere;
And Life—a weary duty—
Is more than I can bear.

Arises everywhere
Your face. Your subtle splendor
Is more than I can bear—
Oh love, be not so tender. . . .

Your face, your subtle splendor—
I am a prey to all. . . .
Oh love, be not so tender!
I swoon, I sink, I fall.

"INTEGER VITAE . . ."

HERRICK and HORACE Rewrite the Latter's
22nd Ode, Book I.

FUSCUS, dear friend,
I prithee lend
An ear for but a space,
And thou shalt see
How Love may be
A more than saving grace.

As on a day
I chanced to stray
Beyond my own confines
Singing, perdie,
Of Lalage
Whose smile no star outshines—

So 'tranced were all
That heard me call
On Love, that (from a grot)

Attempted Affinities

A wolf who heard
That tender word,
Listened and harmed me not.

Thus shielded by
The magicry
Of Love that kept me pure,
I live to praise
Her wondrous ways
Where'er I may endure.

There's but one plan:
The honest man
Wears Vertue's charmed spell;
And free from vice,
That man lives twice
Who lives the one life well.

TO HORACE

BROWNING Supplies the Matter; **DOBSON**
the Meter.

OH, master of song and the lyric
 Satiric,
 Your verse is a storehouse of riches,
 The which is
 Far greater than any great measure
 Of treasure.
 How the lines that begin "*Donec gratus*"
 Elate us.
 The odes to Maecenas and Phyllis,
 They thrill us
 With hints of old stories and glories—
O Mores!
 No more dare we laugh with you, Horace,
 A chorus
 Of students and sages are gleaning
 The meaning
 That lurks in your light-hearted phrases.
 Their craze is

To find 'neath the jest in each column
 Some solemn,
 Deep thought—or where some hidden woe lay.
 'Tis droll, eh?
 How they treat you in Learning's dim halls;
 so
 You're also
 (You, Horace—you drainer of Massic)
 A classic!
 We must place, then, your book with those
 late ones,
 "The Great Ones,"
 Whose volumes lie, more than respected,—
 Neglected.
 So farewell—(and what irony plans it!)
'Sic transit—

LIGHT-VERSE LILITH

As A. C. SWINBURNE and F. LOCKER-
LAMPSON Might Have Collaborated.

WHAT artist I wonder could draw you;
What painter could hope to portray
The grace that was yours when I saw you
Alone at the end of the day.
There was love in the lines of your bodice,
There was magic in many a fold;
And your glance had the glow of a goddess,
My Lady of Gold.

You were reading some book of the hour;
And, skimming the pages in haste,
You paused to adjust a white flower
That had dropped from the ones at your
waist.

Your cheeks were the confident color
That *Coty* or *D'Orsay* supplies;
And the pearls and the diamonds were duller
Than ever your eyes.

Your blushes were blissful and blameless,
A mingling of lilies and fire—
Yet I knew you at once for a shameless
And impotent mock of desire.
For your lips were revealed when I saw you;
They were cruel and careless and cold—
And I wonder what artist could draw you,
My Lady of Gold.

FAERIES

JOHN KEATS and MADISON CAWEIN Discover Them Together.

I HAVE heard music as of tiny strings
Fashioned of corn-silk, plucked by silver
hands;
I have heard music; as if murmurous wings
Stirred in the air to rouse the elfin bands.
Pallid preludings where the rose-tree
stands—

And a voice that sings. . .

A voice that sings so low, that did not you
Know of the forest spirits, you would think,
It was a wind that passed the woodland
through;
And that, among the leaves, the lamps that
wink
Are naught but fireflies; that no faeries
drink

The midnight dew.

Lilies, whose lantern-light glows on the green,
Bend 'neath the pressure of their tinkling
feet;
Daisies and daffodils may now be seen
Gently to bow and sway as if to greet,
And loose a petaled tribute as were meet
A faery queen.

And see, between the boughs, a breathless
glance
Of frisking elves that frolic through the
night!
Glitter of blade and shimmering sword and
lance;
Sparkle of lucent jewels, so richly bright,
One might mistake for flickering moon-
beam light
The faeries' dance.

Nearby, behind a soft and cloudy hill,
The faery-lovers from the dance have
strayed;

The winds come here on tip-toe and they thrill
With echoes of an elfin serenade. . .
There is a human footstep in the glade—
And all is still. . .

I have heard music—bluebells ringing clear,
And ever faint the veery's rising song.
I have heard faery voices, strangely near,
Coaxing the sleepy flowers to join the
throng. . .
A lush and fragile singing that I long
Once more to hear.

PESSIMISM IN THE SLUMS

W. E. HENLEY and FRANÇOIS VILLON Find
a Few Things in Common.

SAY, you there, guzzling from your dinky pail,
Pipe to my lay, and if it don't offend
Cut out the booze a minute; there's a tale
Some gringo-poet-dub once tried to send
Across the boards. D'ye savvy, compre-
hend?
A pote what wrote real man-talk—on the
dead—
One who could put your think-tank on the
bend;
And, with a lot of other guff, he said:
“Life hands us all a lemon in the end.”

He says, says he: “The joys of life are stale;
Punk, on the fritz;—you never can depend

On nothing, 'cept, of course, the county jail—
That's the caboose where every vag can
spend

His month or more." And so he says:

"Extend—

Cut loose, vamoose; go hit the trail instead.

For if you think your luck is on the mend,
Remember, though you've found an easy bed,
'Life hands us all a lemon in the end.'

Drive it in, cull, it's sharp as any nail;

Stronger than Durham of the toughest
blend;

The guy that said: "There's no such word
as fail"

Must have seen things that make a bloke
descend

From off the sprinkling-cart. Say, why pre-
tend

Things can be rosy when you're underfed?

No one returns the money that you lend—
No one gives nothing; not a sou, a shred. . .
Life hands us all a lemon in the end.

ENVOY

Life?—It's a pair of dice that's plugged with
lead;

A crooked game where Death's the dealer's
friend.

And when we cash our chips in for the red

Life hands us *all* a lemon in the end!

LENORE LIBIDINA

E. A. POE and THE PRE-RAPHAELITES Join
Hands.

HE yearned to her with every call and fresh
Lure of her wanton flesh.

“Let Death withhold his hands till I have
been

Held in your fluent hair as in a mesh;
Unpenitent and glad, exulting in
Some strange and splendid sin!

“Give me your lips again, your hands, your
frail

Beauty, perverse and pale;
Your eyes that tremble like a startled wren.
Here is my solace; here all wisdoms fail;
Here is more strength than in a world of
men—

Your lips. . . again—again! . . .”

Then, like a wave, the madness leaped and
died;

Passion grew hollow-eyed.

Her voice no longer swayed; the music
thinned. . .

And as, with sickening soul, he turned aside,

The moon, a goblin riding on the wind,

Peered through the blinds—and
grinned.

"THE KISS IN THE CUP"

BEN JONSON and HARRY B. SMITH Concoct
the Annual *Drinking Song* for the
Annual Casino 'Comic'-Opera.

I

OH some may quaff their tankards and laugh
With many a flowery toast.
They will sing of pale or nut-brown ale
Or the draught they love the most.
But I despise such mirth, for I prize
A sweeter and headier wine—
So drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine.

REFRAIN

When you drink (*Clink-clink*)
Then I think (*Clink-clink*)
That I might of Jove's nectar sup;
Don't deny (*Hi-hi*)
When I sigh (*Fill high!*)
Won't you leave—just a kiss—in the cup!

II

Who can control the thirst of the soul—
And, dear, that plight is mine.
A thirst that gnaws from such a cause
Must have a drink divine.
So while my glass is raised, alas,
My heart is offered up.
And there you may sip with your eyes and
your lip,
If you'll leave just a kiss in the cup.

REFRAIN

When you drink (*Clink-clink*)
Then I think (*Clink-clink*)
Et cetera . . . ad lib., ad infin. . .

PIERIAN HANDSPRINGS

LIFE'S ASPIRATION

A More-than-Symbolic Sonnet for a Frontispiece of the Same Sort by
GEORGE WOLFE PLANK.

URGED by the peacocks of our vanity
Up the frail tree of Life we climb and grope;
About our heads the tragic branches slope,
Heavy with Time and xanthic mystery.
Beyond, the brooding bird of Fate we see
Viewing the world with eyes forever ope'.
And lured by all the phantom fruits of Hope,
We cling in anguish to this fragile tree.

O louring skies! O clouds, that point in scorn
With the lean fingers of a wrinkled wrath!
O dedal moon, that rears its ghostly horn!
O secret stars athwart the cosmic path!
Shall we attain the glory of the Morn—
Or sink in some abysmal Aftermath!

THE DRAMA OF SUMMER

ACT ONE: A rocky stretch of land.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE: Two women,
Who, hand in hand, upon the sand,
Learn of a wisdom they are dim in.
About them lies a world of dreams,
And, smiling with the summer weather,
The younger breathes, "You baste the seams,
And tack the plaits and gores together."

ACT TWO: The actors are the same.

THE SCENE: A wood of pines and birches;
A wood whose beauties put to shame
The cynic soul that doubts and searches. . .
The fair one's face blooms like a flower,
And, with a sigh intensely utter,
She hints, "I let it boil an hour,
Then add about a pound of butter."

ACT THREE: A line of moonlit hills—

Enchantment sweeps the singing river;
And while a love-sick linnet thrills,

They murmur—and their voices quiver:

“I told her she could pack and go—”

“You mean that she”—“My dear, I’m
certain—

She copied all my hats—and *slow!*”

“Well, servants will be servants.”

(CURTAIN)

“—BUT IT WAS FIRST TO FADE
AWAY ”

For years I've gnashed my metaphoric
Bicuspids at the rhapsodies
When poets praised, in rhyme caloric,
Myrtilla, Chloë, Héloïse.
Unmoved by Moore's or Shelley's rapture,
'Spite all these songs, I was a dumb one—
Though I, too, longed and yearned to capture
A not ungracious some one.

And now—oh dream come true—I've seen
her;
Not in a poem, but a dress;
Which, with her classical demeanor,
Is something verse cannot express.
Her window faces mine, and nightly
My far from bashful eyes behold her. . .
She has an arm that's not unsightly,
A neck and *such* a shoulder!

***“—But It Was First to Fade Away”* I I I**

And yet when my inamorata
 Begins to practice Grieg, and when
From her *medulla oblongata*
 Aïda's sorrows sound again,
No longer does her beauty blind me
 For, though she's fair as day a-dawning,
My faithful wife comes up behind me,
 And then—lets down the awning.

THE SEASON'S ROUND, OR FROM COURT TO COURT

*(A composite of twenty-nine Vers de Société
with none of the approved poetic platitudes
omitted.)*

BIRDS in the tree . . . a flower-decked
lea. . .

Love shoots his shaft; the dart takes
wing. . .

A man . . . a maiden fancy-free. . .
—'Tis Spring.

A beach . . . a moon . . . and none too
soon

The maid with Cupid's last newcomer. . .
A balmy night . . . ideal June. . .

—'Tis Summer.

The Season's Round 113

A church . . . a bright October night. . .
A Wedding March . . . a floral hall. . .
A ring . . . the maid in dazzling white. . .
—'Tis Fall.

A scene . . . a short and hot retort. . .
A column in "The Newport Printer". . .
A bleak day and a crowded court. . .
—'Tis Winter.

INSCRUTABILIA

THE POET INDITES :

*" Who have shunned the languid fountains
Where the perfumed pleasures are?
Who have dared to climb the mountains—
Braved the heights to pluck a star?
Who of those who know the dangers
Drive their ship across the bar?*

*" We have spanned the star-strewn reaches,
We have bridged the dread abyss—
All the ghastly corpse-lined beaches
Hold no triumph such as this.
We have robbed Time of its terrors;
We have answered Death's cold kiss."*

* * * * *

THE READERS BESEECH :

Tell us, poet, tell us truly
Of that vague and shrouded land

Which you write of in your newly-
Published poem, gray and grand—
For the message still eludes us,
Tho' we seem to understand.

THE POET RESPONDS :

Would you have your stanzas quoted?
Would you win such fame as mine?
Know then, verse like this the noted
Magazines will not decline;
Thoughts like the above are precious—
Say, at fifty cents a line.

HAMMOCK LITERATURE

LADY who art strangely versed in
Wit and knowledge,
You, whose rank was ever first in
School and college,
Tell me, where can all your saner
Thoughts be leading?
What—to put it even plainer—
Are you reading?

“ Dickens, pah, he’s almost drivell,”
Says this censor;
“ Shaw, he’s really too uncivil;
As for Spencer,
Not a passing thrill of pleasure
He’ll afford me;
Even in an hour of leisure
Pater bored me.”

Yet that one book o'er which for a
Week you're frowning;
Is it Whitman, Heine, or a
 'Guide to Browning'?
"If you *must* know" (then she walks by,
Book before her;)
"It is 'Cosy Kitchen Talks by
Mrs. Rorer.'"

RONDEAU

[*To, For, and By Request of G. S. K.*]

You bid me write, and so this string
Of aimless rhymes is given wing.

These verses, far from recondite,
Are neither elegant nor light;
They have no beauty, point, nor sting.

And yet, somehow, they seem to sing
With quite an eerie sort of swing—

Perhaps it is because tonight

You bid me write.

Now I could sing of Wagner's "Ring,"
Of "Shoes" or "Ships" or even "Spring;"
Of "Summer's Blessing," "Winter's
Blight;"
Of "Shakespeare," "Love," or "Souls
Contrite—"

What? Would I sing of anything

You bid me? *Right!*

FRUSTRATE

[After an Evening with Browning, Masefield, Lewis Carroll and Gertrude Stein.]

I TURNED to the parlor in panic
And blurted out, "What must you think?"
She rippled, "Then let me the canick—
in clink!"

I soared to my feet; it was still dim. . . .
The moon, like an opal in fright,
Leaned over and whispered, "I killed him
Last night."

Not an hour to lose; I would save her—
I fastened my spurs in the air
With the scent of the twilight I gave her
To wear.

And I thought, with a shriek, of how Friday
Would burst into corduroy pants—
And I drove like a fiend, and I cried "Day,
Advance!"

The wind smacked its lips, "Here's a nice
treat."

The sea was a forest of flame. . . .
And so to the billowy Bye Street
I came.

The stars at my shoulder were baying;
I surged through a hole i' the gate;
And I knew that the Bishop was saying,
"Too late."

* * * * *

They tell me that no one believed me;
I *never* was asked to the feast. . . .
My dears, 'twas the cabby deceived me—
The beast!

NOCTURNE

I CANNOT read, I cannot rest;
 I only hear the mournful Muse.
A wan moon staggers in the West.
I cannot read, I cannot rest. . .
Below, a lonely feline pest
 Makes the night loud with amorous views.
I cannot read—I cannot rest!
 I only hear the mournful mews.

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